



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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EARLY DEQ WATER SAMPLE RESULTS

BATON ROUGE – The Department of Environmental Quality and Environmental Protection Agency collected water samples at several areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. The results from the Sept. 4-5 sampling show high levels of bacteria and very low levels of toxics.

Thus far, more than 100 samples have been taken. Water samples from six locations in Jefferson and Orleans parishes have been returned to DEQ from the lab. The samples were analyzed for more than 130 parameters including metals, pesticides and volatile organic compounds like those found in gasoline.

The initial tests showed low readings of toxics, such as heavy metals, pesticides and fuel-related chemicals. The levels were below any levels of concern. EPA is coordinating all sampling activities and data analyses with DEQ and other federal, state and local agencies.

“We are not surprised to find high levels of bacteria in these samples,” said DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel. “The initial results are just the beginning of extensive sampling efforts and do not represent the condition of all flood water throughout the area. DEQ has initiated an extensive water-quality sampling program to document conditions in Lake Pontchartrain and evaluate the impact of pumping the floodwaters back into the lake.”